

**Tourism Workforce Assessment Forum
Holbrook
August 3, 2005**

Discussion Topic 1: Recruitment, Retention & Succession

What non-traditional strategies do you use to recruit entry-level employees?

- Homolovi encourages Hopi artists to apply for jobs. Have not gotten a lot to apply. Computer application system for state has created a barrier, intimidating people
- Most use newspaper ads to fill jobs
- Hopi encourages people to volunteer, then work it into a paid position
- NPC has students who need jobs all the time—please call college when you have job available for entry-level
- Ft. Mohave uses students from Mohave Community College
- Entry-level jobs often help people decide on careers
- Recommendations from other employees critical
- Issue is not applicants, it is qualified applicants

What non-traditional strategies do you use to recruit management employees?

- Biggest issue in rural hospitality is we must live within community. No training in community, so must train themselves
- Mayor Boles wants “ambassador” program to train those front line employees, give them incentive to learn about customer service. Need to tap people who work in that “first experience” job. Need buy-in from employers to pay more than minimum wage to employees who have completed a specific training program. Buttons with “have you seen it yet”, “just ask me”, “glad you asked”, etc. that is more than “supersize me”
- Front-line employees need training on their local area
- Holbrook chamber has free local area training—are not able to attract front-line employees
- NPC did training also
- How to get employer buy-in to send front-line employees to training

Besides wages, what factors contribute to employee turnover?

- Training offered
- Transportation—Ft. Mohave, Petrified Forest
- Not much to do in Holbrook, so young people want to move where there is more of a social life
- Quality of life—municipal government can focus on infrastructure needs
- Entry-level is not just high school kids—good quality of life can attract people who would be willing to work in entry-level job if wanted to live there
- Getting an employee to interact makes all the difference
- Impersonal treatment drives people away

What are you doing/could you do to attract young people to consider a career in the tourism industry?

- Navajo has 70% unemployment—no tourism program at Diné College. Government program there might help
- Native American speakers at Homolovi and Petrified Forest
- Hopi kids in Winslow don't know much about their own culture. Need tourist programs to be developed
- Hopi looking at developing tourism infrastructure
- Identify people who rely on tourism for income
- Very few Hopi with tourism background
- Start with AA degree that can transfer to state universities
- Operators should go through tourism program, get certificate, would help structure the tourism offerings
- Hopi needs to control tourism, because people live in the villages
- Curriculum Development for tourism is critical
- Local Hopi NPC program does offer some hospitality classes
- Hopi ready to discuss opportunities—they know what their issues are
- Apprenticeship program for electricians, etc.—need something like that for tourism

How are you preparing employees for advancement in your organization?

- Make sure advertise advanced positions internally first
- Define job skills needed for higher positions, support training in those skills
- Tourism management positions don't usually have high turnover

- Include employees in as many different aspects of the business as possible, so they can gain experience. While they gain skills that allow them to move on, they also become more valuable while they are there
- Entrepreneurship development is also critical

Are there jobs that a guest worker program would be especially well-suited to fill?

- Language and cultural customs are barriers for guest workers
- Guest workers could benefit Ft Mohave—back end positions would not suffer from language or culture issues. For example, gaming operations is back end
- Seasonal advantages
- Guest worker program can be dangerous, given enormously high unemployment here. Makes local unemployment worse
- Guest workers just want a job, not some specific job
- Hopi would have a housing problem for guest workers
- Focus on educating people in this area

Discussion Topic 2: Industry Trends

How do changing travel preferences affect your workforce and training needs?

- Travelers more interested in culture of the area, not in long, winding road trips
- Need more training because people expect more information about a region. Want real, accurate answers to questions
- Tourists today are smarter, more educated
- Need to market the region, not just your town. Be honest about all the things to do in the area
- More people in campgrounds for 1+ weeks—RVs and vans, not tents. Fewer children, more educated. More independent foreign tourists not in tour groups

What other social trends (cultural, environmental, political, economic, demographic, etc.) do you anticipate impacting your industry?

- Role of Internet—lots of preplanning, people expect more
- “Shoulder” seasons getting more visitation
- Older travelers more mobile, altered school years mean people travel in off seasons
- Navajo Council has decriminalized gaming. Navajo is pushing forward to develop gaming along I-40
- Wireless broadband Internet in a community—travelers love that idea. People look for it when they travel
- Hopi has see lots of international tour operators scouting sites, expect many more international travelers
- Eastern public schools have Hopi in textbooks, lots of interest in Hopis among travelers
- Gallery tours
- Intellectual property rights/protection for Hopi artists
- Go through special cultural program to be able to visit Hopi sites normally closed to the public

What new jobs are emerging in your company or industry?

- Navajo casino—need for casinos, hotel, restaurant workers
- Many Navajo communities have identified tourism as priority
- Diné College must develop tourism program
- Information Technology—more lodging booked online
- Getting e-commerce enabled, businesses need training on how to set up Web shopping carts, etc.
- Virtual business rather than bricks and mortar
- Concerned about customer service aspect of tourism

Over the next five years, what jobs and job skills areas are being phased out from your company or industry?

- Changes in marketing—fewer billboards, more Web

What impact will aging of workforce have on staffing in your industry?

- Positive effect—retired folks who want to do service
- Volunteering at Petrified Forest
- Offsets pressure for wages because they have retirement income
- As employees age, expect higher wages, hospitality industry can't always keep up and accommodate these expectations
- Some older people (Hopi) who have never been in workforce are being tapped for language and cultural training
- Older workers are more reliable

- Some don't want to change, don't want to deal with new programs, new technology
- Wal Mart greeter program has taught us a lesson—smile, be nice
- Older people do know what there is to do in the area

What intergenerational issues affect your workforce?

- Young people often lack knowledge regarding history, what they can share publicly about the tribe
- St. John's uses senior volunteers and high school kids and matches them together to mentor the kids and pass along historical information
- Language barrier—lack of knowledge of Hopi, for example

Discussion Topic 3: Staff Development & Training

What are you currently doing to train and update the skills of your employees?

- Not spending enough on real training programs
- How much education and training is necessary to clean a room
- Well-trained and knowledgeable waiters can get better tips
- Restaurant owners can get repeat business with better trained employees
- Try to focus area knowledge training on those who will be in touch with tourists—even maintenance workers

What educational partnerships does your organization currently have, and how could these be improved?

- Training programs have not gotten a lot of support in Holbrook from business owners
- Hopi high school has hospitality program
- Need to inventory student interests—what do they want to do?
- Tailoring training gets more people to listen—make it relevant to specific area
- Need to be more concerned about quality of training

What needs do you or your customers have that you are unable to meet because your employees don't have the necessary skills?

- Communication skills—too many frontline workers are not engaging customers, too shy, maybe a cultural thing too
- IT skills

What can be done to help prepare younger members of the workforce to appropriately service the needs of your customers?

- All young people need positive feedback to build their confidence
- Use videos as a training tool—require it because it is essential to their job
- Young people are “kept in childhood longer”
- Kids need to be pushed into opportunities that involve risk—they can succeed or fail based on their performance
- Personal financial goals need to be realistic
- In order for programs to be effective, need to be open to any kids, whether their families are economically disadvantaged or not
- Training can't be done during the day for a lot of businesses—needs to be done after hours, Saturdays, etc. Employers and employees must all buy in to the need for this outside the workday training

What can be done to help aging members of the workforce to appropriately service the needs of your customers?

- Need training and positive feedback
- Need to be needed, to be valued for their contribution
- Identify jobs where their maturity and knowledge have value, and physical abilities aren't critical

How will technology affect your staff training and development capacity?

- Computer, satellite, video training saves NPS money and standardizes training
- Put grand Impressions on CD or on Web
- Train the trainer videos. Set up as modules so people don't have to take the whole day
- Online classes and training would be great for rural communities. Need broadband access